



MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, California 90012

Director of Health Services

At its meeting held March 9, 2004, the Board took the following action:

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The following item was called up for consideration:

Supervisor Yaroslavsky's recommendation to instruct the Director of Health Services while negotiating the affiliation agreement with Drew University, to establish a parallel planning track that would enable the Department to maintain hospital services at the King/Drew Medical Center, should the affiliation agreement negotiations with Drew University prove unsuccessful

The following statement was entered into the record for Supervisor Yaroslavsky:

"During the January 13, 2004 meeting of the Board, I made a motion to instruct the Director of Health Services to develop a contingency plan for the administration of Martin Luther King/Drew Medical Center (MLK) without the involvement of the Drew University of Medicine and Science (Drew University). Based upon the Board's discussion, I requested that my motion be continued until today's meeting. The events of the intervening period have served to strengthen my conviction of the necessity for such a plan.

"The recent past of MLK has been characterized by a succession of incidents and revelations that have exposed the failings of the institution. The mounting evidence of system deficiencies has been reinforced by the findings of national and state accreditation and licensing agencies.

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“The Board and Department of Health Services have initiated an unprecedented effort to scrutinize every aspect of the inner workings of MLK, and correct all deficiencies related to the root causes of the hospital’s problems. While this effort is making needed improvements at MLK, the overall prospects of success in turning around the hospital will be negligible without a similar effort at the Drew University.

“The Task Force on Graduate Medical Education, chaired by former Surgeon General David Satcher, made it clear that a radical overhaul of the Drew University is necessary to achieve needed improvements at MLK. The Satcher report provided a prescription for a comprehensive reengineering of the Drew University from top to bottom, starting with the Board of Trustees and the school leadership, and including a reassessment of the entire academic program, including the streamlining and reconfiguration of specialty programs and residencies. Implied in this recommendation is a performance evaluation and realistic assessment of the future role of each specialty program.

“The Satcher Task Force presented its report with a sense of urgency, with full awareness of the interdependence of MLK and the Drew University. When the report was released, it did not appear that the Drew leadership shared the same sense of urgency. The attached March 2, 2004 memo from the Director of Health Services offers little evidence of meaningful progress in the restructuring of the Drew University since that time. While the report references an internal assessment and evaluation process, supported by the California Endowment and other credible resources, I remain unconvinced that a meaningful effort is underway to shake up and restructure the inner workings of the University itself.

“In his March 2, 2004 report, the Director of Health Services indicates that several options to the affiliation agreement are being explored. These include involvement of other universities in the MLK residency program, implementation of a County run academic hospital, or conversion of MLK to a nonacademic hospital. While there is hope for the successful restructuring of the Drew School, the Director of Health Services should move expeditiously to fully assess the feasibility of these other options.

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“As a follow-up to my motion of January 13, 2004, I now believe that the Department should proceed with the development of a detailed plan of action to implement the most feasible option, should the Board conclude that a continued partnership with Drew University is no longer in the County’s best interest.

“I therefore recommend that the Board amend my aforementioned recommendation to instruct the Director of Health Services to provide the Board by May 1, 2004, with an analysis of the options for Department of Health Services affiliation with Drew University, as presented in Attachment III of the Director’s March 2, 2004 memo to the Board, ‘Strategic Alternatives and Plans for DHS-Drew Affiliation.’ This report should include a recommendation from the Department regarding the criteria to be used for a decision to terminate the agreement with Drew University, and a detailed description of the preferred alternative strategy for the operation of Martin Luther King Jr. Medical Center, including a time-line with key decision dates for the Department and Board.”

Dr. Thomas Garthwaite, Director Health Services, Dr. Carole Jordan-Harris, Chair, Drew University Board of Trustees and Dr. Harry Douglas, Interim President, Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science, addressed the Board. Warren Williams also addressed the Board.

After discussion, Supervisor Burke requested Drs. Douglas and Jordan-Harris to report back to the Board on the policy for publication of scholarly work of the academic faculty at Drew University.

After subsequent discussion and revision to his recommendation, Supervisor Yaroslavsky made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Antonovich, that the Board instruct the Director of Health Services to report back to the Board by May 1, 2004, with the following:

1. An analysis of the options for Department of Health Services affiliation with Drew University, as presented in Attachment III of the Director’s attached March 2, 2004 memo to the Board, “Strategic Alternatives and Plans for DHS-Drew Affiliation;”

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2. Recommended detailed criteria to be considered in determining any extension or renewal of the affiliation agreement with Drew University; and
3. Detailed description of the preferred alternative strategy for the operation of Martin Luther King Jr. Medical Center, including a time-line with key decision dates for the Department and Board.

Said motion was duly carried by the following vote: Ayes: Supervisors Yaroslavsky, Antonovich and Molina; Noes: None; Abstentions: Supervisor Burke (Supervisor Knabe being absent).

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Attachment

Copies distributed:

Each Supervisor

Chief Administrative Officer

County Counsel